

and if he lost he often knew how to shroud both his forecast and the result in oracular mystery and darkness so that both parties appeared to be right. At times, as already hinted, he was unlucky, and then he was mercilessly chaffed; but at other times he would have a run of astounding luck, and then his courage would rise to such an extent that he was ready to prophesy and bet about anything.

Among his great misfortunes was a bet made with the mate on May 4th that we should have land in sight by the end of October. And on May 24th he made a bet with Nordahl that by Monday night (the 27th) we should be at 80° east longitude. Needless to say we all wished that his incredible predictions might come true; but alas! the miracle did not happen, for it was not until June 27th that the *Fram* passed the 80th degree of longitude.

During the latter part of May the sun and the spring weather commenced to disperse the layer of snow around the vessel to such an extent as to make quite a little pond of snow-water on the ice forward. As at that part especially, but also all along the side of the vessel, the snow was full of soot, refuse, and the clearings from the kennels, it was greatly to be feared that an injurious, or, at any rate, obnoxious smell might arise, and if, besides this, as was the case last year, a pond should form round the vessel, the water in it would be too impure to be used in flushing the deck. I therefore set all hands to work to cart away the snow from the starboard side—a job which took about two days.

The setting in of spring now kept us busy with various things for some time, both on board and on the ice. One of the first things to be done was to bring our depot safely on board, as lanes and rifts were now forming more frequently in the ice, and some of the goods in the depot would not bear exposure to damp.

The action of the sun's rays on the awning or tent soon became so strong that the snow underneath the boats and on the davits began to melt. All snow and ice had therefore to be removed or scraped away not only under the awning but also under